



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

WHAT THE LIBRARY AND THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CAN DO IN CO-OPERATION FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL

ANNE THAXTER EATON

Librarian, The Lincoln School of Teachers College, 646 Park Ave., New York City

It is occasionally enlightening, and sometimes a bit encouraging, to go back into past history and see the subject in which we are interested viewed from the angle of another day.

In the *Transactions of the London Bibliographical Society* for 1902 there is an article by Professor Foster Watson called "The Curriculum and Textbooks of English Schools in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century." We find one of the schoolmasters of that day, John Brinsley, of a Leicestershire Grammar School, making the following pathetic complaint.

Parents will be at me that their children should every day read some chapter of the Bible in English. . . . Others being more malicious and malignant upon every light occasion are ready to rage and rail at me for that their children, as they say, do get no good under me but are worse and worse for whereas they could have read English perfectly (it may be) when they come to me, now they have forgotten how to do it.

This worthy gentleman would no doubt have been as ready to "rage and rail" as the parents he tells us of, in fact we picture him as becoming fairly apoplectic, could he have foreseen a day when there was to be a definite effort on the part of the teacher to encourage a desire to read not only in the classroom but outside the classroom and provision made to gratify this desire by means of the school library.

The few lines quoted by Professor Watson present a vivid picture of the old-time schoolmaster. We need not, however, go so far back as the seventeenth century to find the Dark Ages of the school library; for we measure the progress of the school library by a comparatively brief tale of years instead of by centuries or even decades.

But if the school library is one of the youngest members of the school family it has been doing its best by making rapid strides to catch up with the others. It is not so long ago in years that the only conception of a school library was a place where material of doubtful value for future use could be conveniently stored, but in our thoughts such a conception seems to belong almost as much to the past as Mr. Brinsley's "Grammar Schoole."

For this change of conception as to the place and methods of the library in the school, the change in ideas in regard to every other department is responsible. The science department of today needs a library as the science department of ten years ago did not; the industrial arts department of today wants books and a connection with the library, whereas the industrial arts department of ten years ago would have smiled at any such notion. The English department of today needs books as the English department of the past never did, even though tradition may have connected it more closely with the library than it did the other subjects.

Just because the present-day English department is making itself a vital and integral part of every other department, it needs the school library more than ever. To be sure, the library cannot fill its true place in the school without the active co-operation of every department, but in order to make that general co-operation possible there is necessary a sort of double co-operation between the library and the English department. What is accomplished should be a joint accomplishment; perhaps we may hope that it will be impossible to tell where the work of one begins and the other ends.

To be more specific, is not the task of finding and presenting reading matter which serves the practical needs of the other departments and which at the same time has, to a greater or lesser degree, literary merit, a task which the English department and library can best undertake together? Should not the library serve as a valuable ally of the English department in the task of leading the student, as Mr. Aydelotte puts it, "to see for himself that there is imagination in science, as well as in literature, reason in literature as well as in science and human truth in both?"¹

¹ *English and Engineering.*

Such books as Lamprey's *In the Days of the Guild* should reach the students in the industrial arts department through an impetus given by the library and by the English department, with the *Fortunes of Nigel* and its picture of apprentice life and the goldsmith's trade in the London of the early seventeenth century as a further suggestion for those interested. So should Rawlings' *Story of Books* and *The Life of Samuel Wedgwood* by Smiles.

Fabre's books, Jordan's *Science Sketches*, Radot's *Life of Pasteur*, link science department, English department and library. Geography courses can be enriched by adding to the supplementary readers some of the best of the contemporary books of travel—such as Francke's *Vagabonding Down the Andes*, Fell's *Russian and Nomad*, Turley's *Voyages of Captain Scott*. The boy whose bent is for railroads and locomotives need no longer snatch the time from other things to read Carter's *When Railroads Were New* or Spearman's *Strategy of Great Railroads*, because in order to obtain credit from the English department he must spend his legitimate time for reading on some other book, better, perhaps, in itself, but less good for him at the moment because it is an artificial task and not related to an actual interest.

By working together the library and English department not only can satisfy, but also can discover and stimulate, more of these interests. Vocational literature with the emphasis on "literature" rather than on "vocational," becomes in this sense the especial and joint province of English department and library.

We are all of us much concerned nowadays with the question, Shall education be cultural or vocational? To some of us, at least, it seems that the final answer must be that the ideal education will be both, for in its best and broadest sense neither type of education excludes the other. As Mr. Chubb puts it, "Education cannot simply be for power and general culture; it must likewise be a novitiate for life, and must include an opening into the vocations."¹

Even those who, like Dallas Sharp,² would exclude actual vocational training from the secondary schools demand that

¹ *The Teaching of English*.

² "Patrons of Democracy" by Dallas Lore Sharp, *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1919.

vocational guidance should become a recognized part of the high-school curriculum.

In whatever way the question is answered there is a field full of possibilities for the English department and the library. For vocational courses and vocational-guidance courses must grow broader, must include more of the background, historical and industrial, for each trade and profession. English department and library can well work together in finding material to supply this background.

Advocates of each type of education will surely agree that pupils must be taught to think more independently, to use their own judgment, to be sincere in their opinions. Here the English department and the library can again co-operate by providing opportunities for freedom of choice in books, within certain broad and wise limits, and by encouraging an honest expression of opinion.

Once it would have been an almost revolutionary idea to think that a school library, where children may go and to all intents and purposes select freely from the shelves, might be a substitute for a list of required reading. To be sure there is, there must be, guidance from both the English teacher and the librarian; there will be lists, too, of various types, to stimulate interest; but even so, will not the boys' and girls' reading become much more of a real experience?

The lists of required reading we are often told have a perilous effect on the after-reading of the child; and all of us have had the experience of hearing some boy or girl say, "Why no, I didn't like it; I *had* to read it for school." Many a book has thus been handicapped for all time, while the same book, selected by the child himself from the open library shelf, may prove a lasting joy. And a taste for reading, for real reading, which enriches and broadens life, which gives freedom and resourcefulness and a quiet mind, which makes a boy or girl a citizen of the world rather than a provincial inhabitant of one little corner of it, is formed and encouraged.

To thus use the library as, in a sense, a substitute for the old-fashioned lists of required reading makes the problem of book

selection all the more vital and important, and calls for the closest and most intelligent co-operation, the putting together of the results of the different angles from which the teacher of English and the librarian see the child's reading. The teacher, of course, has the more intimate knowledge of the child, but the librarian may sometimes supply something which sheds light because of the different kind of contact she has with individual children.

And so, through greater freedom of choice and encouragement of individual interests, the library, we may hope, will come to have something of the pleasant atmosphere suggested by Montaigne when he said: "I do not search or tosse over books but for an honester recreation to please and pastime to delight myselfe."

On the other hand, this atmosphere of freedom and interest will in turn react on a child's feeling toward more formal work, and the preparation of a lesson in general science or in chemistry or physics becomes a more vital thing because of the discovery in the library of such books as Thompson's *Michael Faraday*, Martin's *Triumphs and Wonders of Modern Chemistry*, or Keene's *Mechanics of the Household*.

I believe that the writing of book notes will serve more and more as a means of self-expression in English. Here we have a fertile field of co-operation. A file of such notes in the library will help everyone—children, teachers, librarian. The very fact that the library welcomes the book notes as a help will serve as a stimulus to the children to write notes and to write them well. What child would not rather write something that he feels is going to be read by someone else as a practical help than compose a mere paragraph whose only aim and end is to pass through the hands of a teacher with the minimum number of red marks?

Here is a note written by a tenth-grade girl on Stockton's *Vizier of the Two-Horned Alexander*:

Can you imagine a spring of water, innocent to look at, but with the power of making you immortal? Think of living on forever, not daring to tell of your immortality, fearing you would be put in a lunatic asylum. Think of having to move every fifty years or so, or people would become suspicious of your unchanging appearance. If you like the deliciously absurd, read this book.

Here is another tenth-grade girl's note on *Les Miserables*:

A thrilling, delightful story. You don't have to work to get into it. It starts with an escaped convict asking admission to a very good and saintly priest's house. The priest gladly lets him in, giving him supper and a soft bed. But—during the night—ah, don't guess, find out!

Of Mitchell's *Adventures of François* an eighth-grade boy wrote:

An adventure story of an orphan during the French Revolution. He gets into some very tight scrapes.

A seventh-grade boy thus describes *Silas Marner*—he is at least sincere:

I have read *Silas Marner*. It is an interesting book but quite dry in places. It takes a good while to get started, and when it does get started it doesn't go very fast.

The same boy wrote:

The *Wind in the Willows* is a book about some animals that live like people. It is very interesting even though the name sounds babyish.

And also:

A *Christmas Carol* is a very nice descriptive story. It is about an old miser who gets affected by a spirit and then is very charitable.

A seventh-grade boy wrote of Beebe's *Jungle Peace*:

A wonderful story of the Jungle, a wonderful description of natural things in the Jungle. You can just imagine yourself there.

And a tenth-grade boy thus describes *Henry Esmond*:

A novel about England of the seventeenth century when the Stuarts were trying to regain the throne. It gives a good picture of England and many interesting incidents of the famous Queen Anne's war in which Marlborough fought.

From the third grade we have the following:

The Fables of Aesop, edited by Joseph Jacobs. I like this book because it is about animals and men. Each story has a meaning to it but I like it because the stories are so nice.

The Odyssey for Boys and Girls, by Church. I liked it. I read it through. I liked it because it had bravery and romance in it. And the way it was told.

Davy and the Goblin, by Carryl. It was a lovely book. I think you would like to read it. One Christmas Eve Davy was sitting in front of the fire and a goblin came and took him away. Many funny things happened to him.

Rocky Fork, by M. H. Catherwood. I read it through. I like it. It does not begin well. It is about a little girl named Bluebell Gard. She has some very exciting adventures which you will hear about if you read the book.

From the fourth grade:

A New Year's Bargain, by Susan Coolidge. I like it very much because it kept up being interesting. It is about a girl and a boy who lived with their grandfather in the woods. And how they made a bargain with the months to each tell them a story and give them a present.

American Indians, by Frederick Starr. I read it through. I like it because it tells about Indians and I like stories about Indians and their fights.

Jack of All Trades, by Daniel Beard. I like it very much. I liked it because it was about making things. I am making a house at school so this book is very useful.

Emmeline, by Singmaster. I can say one thing about this book that it is not like other stories about what every child does every day. It is about a girl who lived in the Civil War and her mother sends her to her grandmother and grandfather and they are not there and the rebels come and she helps bandage the wounded rebels.

The following criticisms were made by the fourth grade on their own book notes:

1. It is not necessary to say "I like it" as well as "It is interesting."
2. Many of the reviews would not help a person who is a stranger to the book to know whether he wishes to read it or not.
3. The review should *tell* the part you liked.
4. It should tell why you liked it.
5. It should give only important points.

Written with the feeling that they are to be a guide and help to other boys and girls and to the librarian; written as some third-grade children decided for themselves that they should be written—to tell "whether we liked a book or whether we didn't and what we liked about it and this would help the librarian to know whether we like that kind of a book and would help her to tell other people what kind of books the third grade like to read"—these notes will be an aid in obtaining what the English department of today is seeking for—sincerity in expression rather than an expression of what the child thinks is expected of him.

With the English department the library ought to help in furnishing a measure of children's reading, a record of progression; as an English librarian has said:

The ideal librarian must have that true wisdom—the product of experience and sympathy—which recognizes that boys must be led on very gradually, and that to recommend books of a better class too early is apt to discourage a taste for reading altogether. One librarian of long standing has told me that he is only just beginning to learn, after many years of this work, what can really be done towards helping boys to make a true progress in the choice of books. He points out that it is of no value to say that a boy of a certain age should read and enjoy a certain book, and the comparison must not be made between one boy and others of his age, but between a boy as he is and as he was at earlier stages of his life.¹

We have spoken of the way in which the library and the English department may aid in bringing together all sides of life as experienced by the child. They can, by working together, help also in bridging the distance between the past and the present.

In the present period of adjustment it may be that there is too great eagerness to discard the old just because it is old. Working together, English department and library may remind us that we must not, after all, give up too readily what Professor Greenlaw called, in an address before the California Association of High School Teachers last July, “the Great Tradition.” By this he means, to quote his own words, not only “quickened imagination in our contemplation of the past,” but “the responsibility of the teacher, the scholar, while not losing sight of his special work, to connect that work with the supreme task of our generation, to build on the foundations of democracy laid in the past, the new democracy which is to be.”

Sir Gilbert Murray has said: “There is always a place for protests against the main convention, for rebellion, paradox, partisanship, and individuality and for every personal taste that is sincere. Progress comes by contradiction. Eddies and tossing spray add to the beauty of every stream and keep the water from stagnancy.” But he says also that one must “be able to keep hold of the past and treasure up the history of the past so that in a present that may be angry or sordid he can call back the spirit with which brave men long ago faced the same evils. He draws out of the past high thoughts and great emotions; he draws also the strength that comes from communion with brotherhood.”²

¹ Great Britain Education Department, *Special Reports*, Vol. VI.

² *The Religion of a Man of Letters*.

English teachers and librarians must comprehend both of these attitudes. The present-day efforts to make education real, to make education practical, sometimes cause us to run the risk of overemphasizing its value as a commercial asset. As for example, the situation which has arisen in the field of modern languages, where the treasures of Spanish literature are overlooked and students are urged to study the language because it will increase the salaries they may receive from commercial houses in the future. Here again library and English department can unite in emphasizing the fact that there are certain eternal values "without money and without price."

There was an editorial a few weeks ago in the *New York Times* called "The Return of the Book." After speaking of the larger number of books advertised by the publishers it continued:

The demand for reading matter is such that the publishers feel justified in extraordinary demands to meet it. Few symptoms could be more promising for the return of the public mind to its normal sanity. In comparison to the reign of jazz and farce, the reading of even the lighter order of novels is welcome. At the worst, it indicates a mind which is self-contained, a nervous organization which is capable of sustaining solitude. The best allies of the spirit are the fireside and the study lamp. . . . It is a step in the right direction and a long one, that the public has turned to books and reading.

Whatever the "new education" turns out to be, there is no doubt that it will be finally a *larger* education than any we have known before, an education comprising more diverse elements, an education stretching between more distant extremes. In the English department and the library these extremes have a common ground on which to meet.

Just as Arnold Bennett says, you must hold the balance for yourself between the inspiring kind of literature and the informing kind, since, "if you stick exclusively to the one you may become a mere debauchee of the emotions; if you stick exclusively to the other you may cease to live in any full sense."¹ So in the school, the library and the English department may help to hold the balance between the cultural and vocational elements of the education of the future.

¹ *Literary Taste; How to Form It.*